

move

Raga Dolls

Wordless Meanings



WORDLESS MEANINGS

In the first part of the 20th century, 'Salon Ensembles' proliferated throughout Europe and North America: small groups of 'blue collar' musicians performing in a variety of locations far removed from the concert hall.

Salon Ensembles were the garage bands of their day, setting a precedent, both in terms of economy of scale and 'do it yourself' approach for the jazz and rock'n'roll groups that were to follow. They weren't fussy about what they played, be it a Schubert song, Argentinian Tango, Strauss Waltz or Scott Joplin Rag, as long as people wanted to hear it. This is one of the reasons why they were regarded with disdain by the 'serious' music critics of their day.

Raga Dolls is one of a number of groups currently helping to revive this all but forgotten tradition, but in two important ways we may have more in common with modern day rock bands: firstly, we include a high percentage of original material in our repertoire and secondly, our name has absolutely nothing to do with the music we play!

What follows is a carefully studied and reasoned critique of each of the tracks on Wordless Meanings.

1 A WALTZ – The name says it all!

2 AT THE NEST – Sounds like traditional Irish but it's actually contemporary American Folk.

3 BLACK ORPHEUS – The starting point for this arrangement was a scrap of paper with the melody and chords written on it. Our version must be quite different from the original which I don't think I've heard.

4 STILL LIFE – Initially this was the middle section of a pop song I was writing. I wonder is this classical music?

5 DESTINY – Poor Sydney Baynes could have been the English Johann Strauss II, if only he'd given his waltzes decent names: Destiny, Mystery, Ecstasy, Modesty, Loyalty, Frivolry ... they just don't have quite the same ring to them as G'schichten aus dem Wienerwald.

6 ROMANCE FROM THE GADFLY One of the twentieth century's most versatile composers, Dmitri Shostakovich, wrote this perfect romantic theme for a 1929 Russian movie. Makes you want to rush out and hire the video!

7 LEFT AT CARLISLE – This is an attempt to compose a 'Klezmer' piece which for some reason starts sounding rather Scottish about half way through. The name came later and refers to one of Melbourne's most fascinating multicultural streets, in St. Kilda.

8 INTERMEZZO FROM 'CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA' Pietro Mascagni was the great 'one hit wonder' of Italian Opera. He wrote this at the age of twenty-six and it was all down hill from there – dying in poverty and obscurity fifty-six years later.

9 TANGO – I hope that one day they're not writing similar things about the composer of this piece (actually, I wouldn't mind the one hit!)

10 STÄNDCHEN – People tend to get a bit carried away when describing this most inspired, brilliant, timeless and well-nigh perfect of composers. I'll have to try to avoid that trap.

11 HUNGARIAN DANCE NO. 5 I think Johannes Brahms had something to do with this one!

12 MEDITATION – The guru Jules Massenet proves that hippies were around in the nineteenth century.

13 DU BIST DIE RUH – What was it I said about Schubert? 'Simply du bist' ...

14 ANOTHER TANGO – With just myself on violins and guitars, this new tango represents a fascinating snapshot of the moment in the creative process before the "final polish" is applied. Look for the full band version coming soon on the next Raga Dolls CD!



David Osborne
Violin, Steel String Guitar



Gary Norman
Banjo



Shannon Birchall
Double Bass



George Butrumlis
Piano Accordion



Caroline Craig
Vocals



James Sherlock
Nylon String Guitar

RAGA
DOLLS



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- 1** A Waltz 2'41"
David Osborne
- 2** At the Nest 3'07"
Tammy Rogers and Don Heffington
(Little Tig Music / ASCAP, Ceiling Boy Music / ASCAP)
- 3** Black Orpheus 4'20"
Louis Bonfa
- 4** Still Life 3'44"
David Osborne
- 5** Destiny 7'02"
Sydney Baynes
- 6** Romance from "The Gadfly" 2'41"
Dmitri Shostakovich
- 7** Left at Carlisle 5'10"
David Osborne
- 8** Intermezzo from "Cavalleria Rusticana" 3'54"
Pietro Mascagni
- 9** Tango 3'55"
David Osborne
- 10** Ständchen 3'40"
Franz Schubert
- 11** Hungarian Dance no. 5 3'32"
Johannes Brahms
- 12** Meditation from Thaïs 5'17"
Jules Massenet
- 13** Du Bist die Ruh 3'47"
Franz Schubert
- 14** Another Tango 3'36"
David Osborne

Recording engineer: David Osborne

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